

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the subject Application. Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 since this Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issue regarding further search and/or consideration since the Amendment simplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally-rejected claims and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claims 5, 8 and 11.

By this amendment, claims 1-3 and 13-15 are amended to include the allowable subject matter of claims 5, 8 and 11, and claims 5, 8 and 11 are canceled. No new matter is presented. Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12-15 are presented for further prosecution.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12-15 Recite Patentable Subject Matter

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-4, 7, 10 and 13-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,110,216 to Weber et al. (hereinafter "Weber") in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,900,880 to Cline et al. (hereinafter "Cline"). Claims 6, 9 and 12 are rejected

under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,230,066 to Sferro et al. (hereinafter "Sferro"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the reasons set forth below.

Independent claims 1-3 and 13-15 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claims 5, 8 and 11. Thus, claims 1-3 and 13-15 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 14-15 depend from claims 1-3 and 13-15, respectively. Thus, claims 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 14-15 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 1-3 and 13-15, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12-15.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, allowance of claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12-15, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

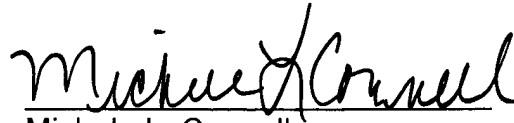
Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this

paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing**
docket number 106145-00034.

Respectfully submitted,

ARENT FOX PLLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele L. Connell", written over a horizontal line.

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